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ABSTRACT

Because Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in the United States and are projected to become the largest minority during the 1980's, the education system must be more responsive to their needs. Fewer Hispanic children enroll in school than do non-Hispanics, many of them fall behind in school, and they have higher attrition rates than non-Hispanic students. Mexican American students are more often retained in grade, placed in low ability groups, or placed in classes for the educationally or mentally retarded than are other students. Mobility and language factors create educational problems for the migrant student. After providing information on historical background and present status of Hispanic students, the report describes the contributions of the following school programs and approaches: Title I, Head Start, Migrant Education, Bilingual Education, Vocational Education, and Special Education. Also discussed is the need for bilingual teachers and texts. Recommendations for improved Hispanic education include: (1) better records on Hispanic groups in order to better address specific educational needs: (2) elimination of all discrimination and segregation of Mexican Americans: (3) facilitation and validation of academic credit accrual and exchange process: and (4) increased bilingual education and other programs for limited-English-proficient students. (CM)

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A LEGACY OF FOUR CULTURES:

EDUCATION AND THE MEXICAN AMERICANS

Working Papers
on Meeting the Education Needs
of Cultural Minorities

November 1980

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Preface

At the 1980 annual meeting of the Education Commission of the States, a resolution was adopted directing staff "to evaluate current and possible activities of the Commission concerning the educational needs of cultural minorities, including but not limited to Hispanics, and to report to the steering committee at its fall 1980 meeting."

To some extent, the ability of the staff to evaluate current activites of the Commission was dependent on developing an understanding of what kinds of education needs are of greatest concern to cultural minorities at this time (summer/fall of 1980). That, in turn, led to the need to group cultural minorities into specific categories and to identify the education needs of each group as well as to determine which needs were common to more than one group.

The staff, therefore, commissioned six papers to be written on the education needs of the following groups: (1) Blacks; (2) Mexican Americans; (3) Cubans; (4) Puerto Ricans; (5) Indians and Native Alaskans; and (6) Asians and Pacific Islanders. The papers were written by individuals who are noted authorities and they were reviewed by individuals who also are recognized as experts on minority concerns. Because of the very short period of time between the annual meeting and the fall steering committee meeting, authors and reviewers were not asked to provide exhaustive, documented reports, but to provide their own perspectives and understanding of the current needs that exist.

A complete list of titles, authors and reviewers follows. The papers will be made available by the Commission, as long as limited supplies last, along with

a "summary report" prepared by the staff. The summary report touches briefly on some of the major concerns raised in the papers and concludes with an overview of ECS activities that appear to be most relevant. The report was prepared for the review of Commissioners to facilitate their discussion at the 1980 fall steering committee meeting of possible future directions that ECS might pursue in the years to come.

Working Papers

on the Educational Needs of

Cultural Minorities

1. The Educational Needs of Black Children, by Andrew Billingsly, President, Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland.

   Reviewer: Robert B. Hill, Director of Research, National Urban League, Washington, D.C.

2. The State of Indian Education, by Lee Antell, Director, Indian Education Project, Education Commission of the States.

   Reviewer: David L. Beaulieu, Academic Vice President, Sinte Gleska College, Rosebud, South Dakota.

3. Puerto Ricans and the Public Schools: A Critical Commentary, by Tony Baez, Program Coordinator, Midwest National Origin Desegregation Assistance Center, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

   Reviewer: Maria B. Cerda, Member of the Board, the Latino Institute, Chicago, Illinois.

4. A Report on the Cuban Students in the Dade County Public Schools, Miami Florida, by Rosa Guas Inclan, Supervisor of Bilingual Education, Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida.

   Reviewer: Gil Cuevas, Program Specialist, Miami Desegregation Assistance Center for National Origin (Bilingual Education), University of Miami, Miami, Florida.

5. A Legacy of Four Cultures: Education and the Mexican Americans, by Vicente Z. Serrano, Director, Interstate Migrant Education Project, Education Commission of the States.

   Reviewer: Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr., ECS Commissioner, Vice Chancellor for Educational Development, Maricopa Community College, Phoenix, Arizona.

6. Asian and Pacific Americans: An Educational Challenge, by Siri Vongthieres, Senior Consultant, Lau Project, Colorado Department of Education, and Lawrence A. Egan, Senior Consultant, Bilingual Education Unit, Colorado Department of Education, Denver, Colorado.

   Reviewer: Masako H. Ledward, ECS Commissioner, Chairperson, Hawaii Education Counsil, Honolulu, Hawaii.

7. Summary Report, staff document prepared for the fall 1980 meeting of the steering committee of the Education Commission of the States.

Executive Summary

Serrano's paper provides a perspective of both the past and future of the Mexican American people and, in so doing, provides some excellent reasons for rethinking present practices. Looking at the historical past, Serrano reminds the reader that Mexican Americans represent a unique blend of the cultures of this nation -- as representatives of both European (Spanish) and Native American cultures, and as a people who have contributed to the development of our society from the days of the Spanish explorers.

Looking toward the future, the author points out that, already a large minority (over 7 million), Mexican Americans are a reapidly growing group, both as a result of immigration and natural increase. If Mexican Americans of the future are to participate more effectively in the political process -- and in the economy -- than they have in the past, then the education system must be more responsive to their needs.

Their education needs are, in many ways, similar to those of other minorities, resulting from disadvantagement, poverty and stereotyping. Mexican Americans need also to participate in planning and decision making processes, as do other minority groups, to assure that education programs are responsive to the needs of their children. In addition, Spanish is spoken in the homes of the majority of Mexican Americans recently arriving in the United States and a substantial percentage (approximately 20 percent) of those who are long-term residents. Thus, bilingual education and other specialized programs for limited-English-proficient students are urgently needed, as are greater numbers

of bilingual teachers.

In addition, a greater emphasis must be place on meeting the education needs of Mexican Americans at the postsecondary level. Alfredo de los Santos, the reviewer, will direct his comments toward that concern. (Note: Dr. de los Santos was unable to submit his comments prior to the fall steering committee meeting, but they will be included with the paper as soon as they are available.)

Historical Background

In order to understand the Mexican Americans more fully, as a people, their early beginnings must first be explored. From an abbreviated historical study, we find that four very important cultures have been the ingredients that have been fused into the amalgam that is now the Mexican American culture. These four are: the Spanish culture; the New World Indian culture; the Mexican culture; and the American culture.

1. The Spanish Culture. From the Iberian peninsula, where Spain is located, the Mexican Americans inherit a multifaceted Spanish legacy. The Iberians are said to be the first inhabitants of Spain. About 1000 B.C., Spain was influenced by many cultures such as those of the Phoenician and Greek seamen and traders who established the city of Cadiz and trading stations south of Spain.

From the ninth to sixth century B.C., several waves of Indo-European speaking people invaded Spain. These were Celtic tribes that were accompanied by small groups of German and Belgic peoples. The Romans followed, and remained on the peninsula for six centuries. Thus Spain became part of the Holy Roman Empire, one of the greatest powers the world has ever known. The Romans gave the Latin language, their religion, laws and government to this very important province of the empire.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, at the beginning of the sixth century A.D., the Visigoths occupied the peninsula. In 711, the Moors entered Spain, not to be expelled until after an approximate eight-century occupation ending in 1492.

The marriage of Fernando II de Aragon with Isabel de Castilla brought about the unification of Spain that resulted in the expulsion of the Moors in 1492. The year 1492 also marked the beginning of an era of glory and power for Spain, which became the most powerful nation in the world in the sixteenth century.

Fernando and Isabel began to become interested in the expansion of Spain. Isabel decided to help the explorer, Christopher Columbus (Cristóbal Colón) with his "enterprise to the Indies" in 1492. Columbus, with his three ships, la Niña, la Pinta and la Santa María, after sixty days arrived at a small Carribbean island which he named San Salvador. Thinking that he had landed in India, he named the inhabitants "Indians." History books tell us that this was the beginning of the New World as we have come to know it.

2. The New World Indian Culture. The New World Indian ancestors of the Mexican Americans were a highly organized and civilized people. As early as 8000 B.C., the first records of civilization were found in Peru. Anthropologists report that a fisherman-type people settled on the coast around 3000 B.C. Some moved into the Andes and it was here that the Incas excelled in architecture and art. Traces of their structures still exist. Corn, a crop to attain great importance in the New World, was introduced around 800 B.C., and the Mochica Indians in South America build aqueducts, pyramids, and made ceramics that were highly developed. The Mayans, from about 300 to 900 A.D., built great temples and cities. Through the cataloging of plants, herbs, animals and fish, the sciences of medicine and natural history developed. The most significant invention was the Aztec calendar inscribed in stone.

The Aztecs dominated most of Central America and Mexico from about 1200 to 1500 A.D. The Aztec capitol, in 1519, was Tenochtitlan, which was located

in the central valley of Mexico. This great metropolis had fine roads, canals, temples and business centers that rivaled European capitols of the time. This sizeable empire, which filled the Spaniards with wonder, was ruled by Montezuma. He had ruled the valley for almost twenty years before Hernando Cortez arrived in Mexico.

e. The Mexican Culture. The two principal historical figures that had important roles in shaping the lives of Mexican Americans to the present day are Hernando Cortez and Montezuma. The ensuing integration of the Spanish and Indian cultures brought forth the development of the Mestizo, or Mexican, culture.

The New World did not remain a land full of "savages" and unexplored lands. The first university on the North American continent was founded in Mexico in 1533 and St. Augustine, Florida was founded in 1565. Don Juan de Oñate, on April 30, 1598, arrived near what is presently El Paso, Texas. He, some Franciscan friars and some 400 colonists had traveled from Mexico to claim the land for King Phillip of Spain. Oñate was an "Español Mexicano," or a "Gachupin," born in the New World in a wealthy Spanish family. His wife was the granddaughter of Cortez and Montezuma's great granddaughter.

In 1610, Santa Fe was founded as the capitol of New Mexico and is the oldest capitol of any state of the United States. Here too, to the present day, can be found families that are direct descendents of Spanish families that inhabited the area before it became Mexican or American land. By 1718, San Antonio, Texas was founded and it formed an important trading center on the long trail from Vera Cruz and Mexico City to east Texas, where a number of forts were located. The Spanish hold on California was established by friars who founded a chain of missions along the west coast. El Pueblo de Nuestra

Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula, founded by Father Junipero Serra in 1781, is now known as Los Angeles.

On the 16th of September, 1810, Father Miguel Hidalgo de Costilla led an open revolt of Mexico from Spain. An unlikely alliance of Indians, Mestizos and radicals was inspired by this priest in their fight against the royalists. His army had initial success, but was later routed at Guadalajara. He fled north toward the United States but was betrayed and captured. His visions of social reform and independence provided the inspiration for later revolutionary movements in Mexico. Jose María Morelos followed Hidalgo's example and continued the bitter struggle, and Mexico finally won its independence from Spain in 1821.

New exploration and settlement in the west took place in the early 1800s. Texas became a land of opportunity and the Santa Fe Trail was first blazed in 1821. This trail led from western Missouri to Santa Fe, which was still a part of Mexico. About the time of Mexico's struggle for independence from Spain, General Jackson seized Spanish forts throughout Florida in the War of 1812. In February 1819, John Quincy Adams signed a treaty with Spain that joined Florida, southern Alabama and southern Mississippi to the United States.

In 1823, John Quincy Adams also assisted President Monroe in proclaiming "the Monroe Doctrine," which stated that European influence in the Americas would no longer be tolerated. Mexican influence in Texas was no longer to be tolerated either. During an early battle, before the Mexican American war, General Antonio López de Santa Anna defeated a group of Texans in December 1835 at the Alamo. The Alamo victory was, however, soon clouded as American forces took Santa Fe and California was brought under American rule. With the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, peace was made.

Along with the large area of land that Mexico gave up, the Mexican American was born. About 100,000 Mexican Americans inhabited the nearly one million square miles ceded.

4. The American Culture. The Mexican Americans already had a great legacy in North America from their Spanish ancestors' early exploration on this continent and the founding of St. Augustine in 1565. Nonetheless, American history books establish this country's beginnings in 1620, with the landing of the pilgrims on Plymouth Rock.

All that is American has been inherited by Mexican Americans, both the good and the bad, the triumphs and defeats in history, economics, science, sports -- all that is part of our American society, including education. The American heritage is the pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, Paul Revere, Washington crossing the Delaware, abolition of slavery, the Little Big Horn, prohibition, FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, the astronauts walking on the moon, Martin Luther King, and even Watergate.

Through its technological, scientific and economic advances, the United States has become a world power. The wealth and opportunities generated have brought about the best standard of living in the world, and many of the world's people want to become active participants in this environment. So too do our neighbors, the Mexicans. This creates many problems for both the United States and Mexico. Workable and mutually beneficial policies must be developed between these two nations in order to properly deal with the flow of people from one nation to the other.

In summary, the Mexican Americans have a glorious, impressive and majestic legacy that is often overlooked by educators:

- From their Spanish heritage they bring the legacy of the laws and the language of the Holy Roman Empire -- one of the greatest powers the world has ever known.
- From their Indian heritage, they bring building skills and knowledge of science -- botony, biology, astronomy and agriculture.
- From their Mexican heritage, they bring courage and perseverance in their search for freedom.
- From their American heritage, they have inherited the quest for equality and justice, for themselves and for future generations.

Despite all of the above related historical facts, Mexican Americans are often relegated to second class citizenship, socially, economically and educationally.

The Mexican American -- Today and Tomorrow

Data is not always kept exclusively on Mexican Americans and, therefore, the category "Hispanic Americans" has had to be used at times in collecting the data for this paper. The term Hispanic Americans will be used when a collective citation is referred to and Mexican Americans will be used when the citation has been selectively identified from within the total Hispanic category.

1. The Hispanic Population. There are more than 12 million Hispanics in the United States divided into the following subgroups: (a) Mexican Americans, who number 7 million, or 59-60 percent of all Hispanic Americans; (b) Puerto Ricans, numbering 1.8 million; (c) Central or South Americans, 0.9 million; (d) Cubans, 0.7 million; and (e) "other" Hispanics, 1.5 million. Hispanics are the second largest, and the fastest growing, minority in the United States and are projected to become the largest minority during the 1980s.

Forty-two percent of the total U.S. Hispanic population is under 20 years of age, so major political and economic Hispanic strength will find its full

expression during the 1980s and 90s, altering politics and economics in ways not yet imagined.

The number of Hispanics reaching voting age in future years will be about two-thirds higher, proportionately, than other Americans 18 years of age. This combination of population growth and improved voter participation could increase strength in the ballot box from the two million that voted in 1976 to about eight million in the 1996 election. The next 20 years might also see an increase in the number of Hispanic members of the U.S. House of Representatives, from five in the last two decades to a possible 25, and, in the Senate, from one to four.

Three other facts related to the number of Hispanics are:

- If current trends continue, minorities will comprise more than 60 percent of the population of California by 1990, making it the first "third world" state in the United States. Presently, minorities in the U.S. comprise about 17 percent of the total population and by 1990, it is projected that they will represent about 22 percent.
- The Hispanic social and cultural fabric in the future will be influenced by changing societal values; Hispanic values will also influence those of Anglos.
- Already the fourth largest Spanish-speaking nation in the hemisphere, the U.S. is projected to become the third largest by 1990. The second most frequently used language in the United States is Spanish, and the second largest urban concentration of Hispanics in the world is found in Los Angeles (second only to Mexico City). It seems very probable that the majority of these city dwellers will bear Spanish surnames.

2. Location. Hispanics are found in every state in the Union. Concentration varies from state to state, but 75 percent of all Hispanics are found in five states: California, Florida, New Mexico, New York and Texas. Hispanics constitute 36 percent of the population of New Mexico and 21 percent of the population of Texas.

Mexican Americans are concentrated in the states of the southwest. New Mexico also has a large number and percentage of "other" Hispanics, reflect-

ing New Mexico's early colonization by Spain. The availability of manufacturing and agricultural jobs in Illinois has resulted in that state becoming home to many Mexican Americans as well as many migrants of both Mexican and Mexican American descent. Hispanics could be the majority population in three or four states by the year 2000.

According to 1978 Bureau of the Census data, Hispanics are concentrated in the central cities, with 85 percent living in metropolitan areas. One-half of all Hispanic families live in inner cities as compared to one-fourth of all non-Hispanic families.

3. Age, Size of Family. Hispanics, as discussed above, are generally younger than the white population. Their median age in 1978 was 22.1 years as compared to 30.6 years for whites. Hispanic families are larger than other American families with about 16 percent having 6 or more members, (more than twice the percentage for non-Hispanic homes). Mexican Americans, of the various Hispanic groups, have the largest mean family size (of 4.1 members), while Cubans and "other" Hispanics have the smallest, with 3.5 members per household.

4. School Data. School enrollment data for this relatively young Hispanic population point to three disturbing trends in their education:

- Hispanic children enroll in school at lower rates than do non-Hispanics.
- In progressing through school, Hispanic children fall behind their classmates.
- Attrition rates for Hispanics are higher than for non-Hispanic students.

Approximately three million Hispanic children were enrolled in elementary and secondary schools in 1976, representing six percent of the total public school enrollment in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Nine states

enrolled 90 percent of the Hispanic children in public elementary and secondary schools, with California, Texas and New York accounting for 67.5 percent. Within the Hispanic population, Mexican American children comprised 63 percent; Puerto Rican children, 15 percent; Cuban and Central and South American children, 5 percent each; and the remaining 11 percent was made up of "other" Hispanics.

At the nursery school level, 75 percent of white families enrolled their children in private child care facilities in contrast to 45 percent for Hispanic families. The difference is most likely explained by the fact that relatively few Hispanic families are financially able to afford child care. From the kindergarten to high school levels, Hispanic children attended school at a lower percentage rate than did white children.

Only 56.7 percent of Hispanic children enroll in kindergarten, in contrast to 64.6 percent of white children. During the ages of 7 to 13, the gap disappears, but widens again during high school. The underenrollment is accompanied by a gradual falling behind their age group as students are promoted through the system, leading to lower high school graduation rates for Hispanics than for non-Hispanics.

The poor condition of education for Hispanic youth affects, of course, the adult Hispanic population. Only 41 percent of Hispanic adults hold a high school diploma, whereas 67 percent of the non-Hispanic adult population finish high school. Every Hispanic subgroup is lower than the non-Hispanic population, even though there is a great deal of variation between groups. "Other" Hispanics have the highest percentage of high school graduates with 58.4 percent, while the Mexican Americans have the lowest percentage, with only 34.3 percent.

5. The Language Spoken. Spanish is spoken in 80 percent of Hispanic households. About one third of the Hispanic population, just over 3.7 million, usually speak Spanish. The place of birth is usually related to the language spoken. Among Mexican Americans born in Mexico, about two-thirds use Spanish as their usual language. Less than 20 percent usually speak Spanish among those Mexican Americans born in the United States.

The choice of language reflects the experience and decisions of the family with respect to raising their children. A desire to develop each child's sense of ethnic and self-identity is reflected in those decisions as well as the hope that each child will be able to develop his or her potential along the lines that seem most suitable to them as individuals. Finally decisions by parents are influenced by their own experience as children, by the love and aspirations that their own parents had for them and by their perceptions of their future as Mexican Americans.

The choice of language also, however, affects children as they proceed through the education system. In a recent "fact sheet" prepared by the U.S. Department of Education, the problem was summed up as follows*:

> "The number of school-age children whose primary language is other than English is large and growing. Latest estimates place the number at over 3 1/2 million, over 70 percent of whom are Hispanic.
>
> "Dropout rates are well over three times higher for Hispanic youth with limited English proficiency than for Hispanic youth who do not face a language barrier.
>
> "The problem faced by students who have limited English proficiency in English is that by the time English skills are acquired, the students have fallen far behind their peers in other subjects.
>
> "The Department has concluded that this language barrier is a major obstacle to equal educational opportunity."

* The "fact sheet" was prepared by the Department in conjunction with the recent hearings (September 1980) on the proposed regulations for implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act with respect to national origin minority students.

6. Income and employment. The income figures for Hispanics are very low. In 1977, the median annual income of Hispanic Americans was $5,564 as compared to a median income of non-Hispanics of $6,484. In 1977, 21.4 percent of Hispanic families had incomes below the poverty level, in contrast to 8.7 percent of non-Hispanic families. Twelve percent of Mexican Americans have incomes below the poverty level and even Cubans, who have among them a professional class and who receive aid from the federal government, have ten percent living below the poverty level.

Eight percent of the Hispanic population hold technical and professional positions compared to 16 percent of the non-Hispanic population. Most Hispanics are in low-paying jobs in the service and manufacturing industries and in agriculture. Many newcomers have tended to be poor, poorly educated and untrained for skilled jobs. Their economic advancement has been hindered by the language barrier, by their tendency to congregate in rural, suburban and urban "barrios" or "colonias," and by cultural differences that may serve to isolate them from the American mainstream and perpetuate their low social status.

The bakcground of Hispanics may be the cause of low social status, but discrimination is also responsible for the academic problems of Hispanic students. Schools are transmitters of a society's values and in a variety of ways have contributed to the low school performance rates of Hispanics -- by shunting Spanish-speaking children from poor families into low achiever education tracks, by classifying them as emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded, by conveying to them the message that they cannot, or are not expected to, succeed, and by belittling their Hispanic heritage. The public education system as a whole has generally not welcomed Hispanic children, nor been very

willing to deal with their unique learning problems in a way that has been effective.

Other Factors Affecting Mexican American Education

1. Segregation and discrimination. As late as the 1970s, the practice of segregating Mexican American or Chicano public school children was still widespread. A comprehensive study documenting discrimination against Mexican American students was conducted by the United States Commission on Civil Rights (Mexican American Study Reports I-VI, 1968-1974). It concluded that:

- Mexican Americans were ethnically isolated in schools.
- Schools use a variety of exclusionary practices that prevent Mexican American students from achieving at a rate equal to Anglo classmates.
- Existing school finance systems result in discrimination against Mexican American school children.
- Teacher-student interaction patterns favor Anglo students. There is greater discriminatory teacher behavior toward Mexican American children on the parts of both the Anglo and the Mexican American teacher.
- Mexican American students are more often retained in grade, placed in low ability groups, or placed in classes for the educationally or mentally retarded.
- Mexican American students are underrepresented in extracurricular activities. This is true whether Mexican American students constitute a majority or a minority of the total school enrollment.
- Mexican Americans are all but excluded from the policy making bodies of southwestern schools. During the early 1970s, only six members of state boards of education in the southwest were Mexican Americans. Central staff members are overwhelmingly Anglo.

This 1976 study by the Office for Civil Rights, covering about two-thirds of the three million Hispanic school children in the United States, showed that about two-thirds of schools attended by Hispanics were predominantly comprised of minority students. Schools with 90 to 100 percent of total en-

rollment composed of minorities were attended by over 30 percent of the Hispanic students. Another 30 percent attended schools with minority enrollments of between 50 and 89 percent. In a comparison by regions, it was shown that segregation of Hispanic students was highest in the northwest, but was increasing rapidly in the midwest.

Social scientists seldom attribute low academic achievement by Mexican American students to prejudicial and discriminatory educational and personal practices that existed in the past and that still prevail today in more subtle ways. Fortunately, some of these conditions are being corrected in some schools.

2. A study of high school seniors. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) began its National Longitudinal Study in 1972. A representative sample of high school seniors were the subjects of the base-year data collected. The respondents were classified as White, Black or Latin American (Hispanics). The study showed that Hispanics had a higher attrition rate than Whites. Some conclusions from that data were:

- Hispanic high school seniors were somewhat older than their White classmates, reflecting the higher rate of delayed education for Hispanic students. Only 20 percent of the White seniors, but 49 percent of the Hispanic seniors, in the spring of 1972, were over 18 years old.
- Although Hispanic and White seniors reported spending almost equal amounts of time on their homework, Hispanic students tended to get lower grades. Only 35 percent of Hispanics reported grades of "mostly B" or better, compared with 52 percent of White students. Given the high verbal content of most high school courses, it is possible that the grade differential is due to differences in English language proficiency.
- Hispanic students, more often than White students, reported being distracted from their studies by worries over money, family obligations, lack of a good place to study at home, and the feeling that their parents were not interested in their education.
- Almost equal percentages of White and Hispanic students made their choice of a high school program on their own. Among those students who

were influenced by others, Hispanic students were most likely to seek advice from multiple sources.

- Although many Hispanic students felt that their parents' lack of interest in their education adversely affected their study habits, almost twice as many Hispanic as White students reported that they were influenced by their parents in their choice of a high school program. Hispanic students more than White students were also influenced by their friends, guidance counselors, teachers, principals, clergy and other adults (both relatives and non-relatives). It is of interest to note that relatively more Hispanics than Whites reported that they had no choice of a high school program.

- When asked how important various factors were in their lives, two factors were judged very important by over 80 percent of both Hispanics and Whites. These were: (1) being successful in their line of work; and (2) finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life. Hispanic students more often than Whites also placed a greater importance on: (1) providing their children with better opportunities than they had; (2) working to correct social inequalities; (3) being a leader in the community; and (4) living close to their parents. White students more often than Hispanics placed importance on having strong friendships.

- Generally fewer Hispanic than White seniors participated in extracurricular activities.

- When asked if they had ever heard of certain federal programs designed to assist the educationally disadvantaged, such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Talent Search and Upward Bound, large percentages of both Hispanics and Whites were unaware of these programs. Awareness was, however, slightly higher among White students.

3. The migrant student. Of the one million migrant students estimated to be in the United States, 60 to 70 percent are Spanish speaking. About 85 to 90 percent of these 600,000 to 700,000 migrant students are Spanish-speaking Mexican Americans born in the United States. The most outstanding characteristic of the migrant student is, of course, mobility -- a fact of life for these students, whether they move within their home state or from state to state.

Mobility causes students not only to change schools, but also to miss a great deal of classroom instruction. A 1978 study of migrant dropouts in

California (Nalker and Gallo), found that irregular attendance manifests itself in low achievement, lack of interest in school, and students who are often one or two years older than other students in their grade level. First, when the families move and are getting settled, the students miss school. For families that move to two, three or four work sites in a year, the children could miss twenty to thirty days of school, approximately 10 to 15 percent of a 180-day school year. The second major reason migrant students attend school irregularly is that they often have to work in the fields because the family needs the money they earn. Most migrants are paid by piecework, so every worker adds to the income potential. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Rowe 1976), most migrants work less than 150 days a year, so an older child is an important part of the family economic picture.

Besides moving frequently, and attending school irregularly, migrants often speak a language other than English, as noted above. This is especially true of Hispanics from south Texas and southern California. Thus, the students may be at a considerable disadvantage in schools where there are no teachers who speak their language, and no curriculum materials that are written in their dominant language.

Migrant students are also faced with an education system that is highly differentiated. There are some 17,000 school districts in the United States operating under various degrees of autonomy granted by the 50 states. Also, because education is constitutionally the responsibility of the states, each state develops an education system that meets the needs and corresponds to the predominant values of its citizens.

Basically, the differences between various state and local school systems can be attributed to the fact that schools are planned to meet the needs of

the permanent student. Migrant students, by definition, are not permarent students anywhere (although most migrants do operate out of a fixed home base such as Texas).

The U.S. Department of Education has operated the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) since 1970, through the Arkansas Department of Education. The system is designed to help the children of migrant agricultural workers and fishers in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. It provides for rapid transfer of accurate education data and health records -- within 24 hours after the student is enrolled in the system.

The education difficulties faced by the migrant student are the same as for all disadvantaged students -- but mobility, and often language factors, have served to compound those difficulties. (It should be noted, however, that other non-English-speaking students are also affected by mobility and other factors as they move from one school to another, following their parents as they change work sites).

4. Isolation. Isolation of the Mexican American population can occur in various ways. One way is the isolation that may occur when the migrant family goes to work in a remote rural area. Specialized education programs for their children may either be too far away or, possibly, non-existent.

The further Mexican Americans have moved from the soutwest, the smaller in percentage of population they became (with the exception of those who moved to Illinois). If there are just a few in a city, the number does not present a threat to the non-Hispanic population, so the individuals are usually accepted or at least tolerated. If the "barrio" or "colonia" of Mexican Americans is sizable, they may then represent a socio-economic threat to the non-Hispanic community and prejudice and discrimination may enter into the

picture. The jobs of non-Hispanic individuals might be at stake.

Isolation can and has occurred in the large and small cities by gerrymandering, or limiting housing in given areas for purchase by Mexican Americans. Often, housing is overpriced in order to prevent encroachment. Economic isolation also occurs when, due to family income, persons are forced to live in low-cost and, sometimes, not very inhabitable housing.

5. Present immigration. The latest figures from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service show that, in 1978, nearly 100,000 Mexicans immigrated legally into the United States. There were over 900,000 apprehensions of Mexican nationals attempting to enter the United States illegally. The Border Patrol estimated a total number of successful illegal entries at between 875,000 and 1,750,000 each year, with the majority coming from Mexico and the balance from Canada.

The pressure to emigrate from Mexico is prompted in part by its rapid population growth. Mexican nationals are also attracted by the hope of finding jobs, settling, usually, in urban areas where they are often subject to abuse and exploitation. To some extent they place a burden on public services, such as the education and health systems, because they are not counted for funding under federal or state aid programs. On the other hand, they may be contributing more to the economy than they receive.

A U.S. Department of Labor study estimated that 77 percent pay Social Security taxes; benefits that aren't likely to be collected. Federal income taxes are deducted from the wages of approximately 72 percent, and all pay local and state sales taxes on purchases. Less than one percent are on welfare, and less than eight percent appear to have children in school.

While a solution to immigration problems is being worked out between Mexico

and the United States, something has to be done to educate newly arriving children. Those born in this country are American citizens by birth and are entitled to an education. Others may not be so entitled. The state of Texas passed a law in 1975 that does not allow ADA payments for undocumented children. At this writing, the case has not yet been decided, but the Texas law may be found unconstitutional since it is being argued that it denies children equal protection under the U.S. Constitution.

Special Programs and Approaches

1. Title I: the cornerstone of compensatory education. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), was passed by Congress in 1965 to provide financial assistance to local school districts in planning and operating special programs for educationally disadvantaged children. It is a supplemental program, not intended to supplant any current program provided by the district, and it is a categorical rather than general aid program. Its purpose, as stated by Congress, is:

> To provide financial assistance to local education agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low income families to expand and improve their educational programs by various means which contribute particularly to the special educational needs of educationally deprived children.

Since many Mexican American students are from low income families, have special education needs and are often educationally disadvantaged, they are eligible for participation in local Title I programs.

2. Head Start. The Head Start program was also initiated in 1965. It is administered by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) in the Department of Health and Human Services to provide health, education,

social and nutritional services for preschool children. Of the 400,000 children being served in 1979, aged 3, 4 and 5, approximately 20 percent were Hispanic.

In 1975, a new effort was initiated by ACYF that focused the Head Start program on the needs of Spanish-speaking children. Four bilingual-bicultural models were developed as part of this effort, specifically tailored to meet the needs of Spanish speaking children. All regions of the country will soon have these models available to them.

3. Migrant education. Children of migratory agricultural workers have received benefits from federal programs since 1966, under an amendment to Title I of ESEA. Eligible under Title I migrant programs are children who move with their families from one school district to another during a year so that a parent or other family member can obtain work in agriculture or related food processing activities. In later years, fishers and tree harvesters were also included.

Three groups of children are eligible for this program: interstate migrant, intrastate migrant, and formerly migrant (students who have been out of the migrant stream for a period of less than five years). Projects designed to serve these children must meet the specific special education needs of the children of migrant families. Funds can be used to provide services to:

- Impove the education program offered to migrant children through such techniques as bilingual education.
- Hire the additional teachers, aides, counselors and social workers needed for such programs.
- Provide recreational, cultural and library services.
- Train staff members to understand the needs and the culture of migrant children.

- Purchase education materials, including mobile classrooms to follow the children from camp to camp, bilingual course materials, art supplies and industrial arts and pre-vocational education equipment.

Since the beginning of the program, approximately 85 percent of the children served were in elementary school programs. A new emphasis on the secondary school student has evolved that has engendered a greater focus on the awarding of secondary school academic credit, credit accrual and exchange. With the recent formation of the Department of Education, responsibility for the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), formerly under the Department of Labor, has been assigned to the new Office of Migrant Education. Education program concerns now span the entire spectrum, from preschool to postsecondary education.

4. Bilingual education. Instruction in two languages is not new to American education. It was begun as early as the 19th century in private and public schools in communities settled by German, Scandinavian and French immigrants. Schools in Cincinnati, between 1840 and 1917, offered classes in German to pupils who understood no English. From time to time, Yiddish, German, Italian and Chinese have been used to educate new groups of foreign-born children who came to the New York City public schools.

Around World War I, when anti-German feelings swept the country, speaking English was the mark of political loyalty and adequacy as a citizen, and bilingual education was eliminated. Even the use of foreign languages below the eighth grade was forbidden. A policy of Americanization then began in earnest, with instruction only in English. The revival of bilingual education began again in the early 1960s with the sudden influx of Cuban refugee students into the Miami area. The schools responded by offering instruction in Spanish until the students were able to learn in English. This technique was

used later in Texas and New Mexico.

The education problems of linguistically different children began to receive federal attention in 1968 with the signing of the Bilingual Education Act (now Title VII of ESEA). The act was a response to the fact that children whose first language was not English were failing academically and the dropout rate was inordinately high.

Originally, special help in learning English was often in the form of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), which necessitated removing the student from the regular classroom in order to provide specialized instruction in English. This process causes students to miss out on regular classroom instruction and, as a result, to fall further and further behind in their regular school work. There has been increasing attention given to bilingual education as a way of avoiding this problem.

Title VII provides financial assistance to local education agencies to develop and implement demonstration programs that use new approaches, instructional services and activities designed to meet the special needs of children of limited-English-speaking ability where there are high concentrations of children from families with incomes below $3,000 per year. The Department of Education estimates that there are 3.5 million pupils in the United States who have a need for some form of special language assistance to help them deal with the regular school curriculum, (see information from the Department of Education "fact sheet" on page 10).

Grants are awarded on a 12-month basis and assistance may be provided for as long as five years. A condition for funding, however, is that school districts must gradually assume the costs of the program following the second year of funding. Although the federal government funds bilingual programs

to serve 74 different language groups, more than 65 percent of the funds are used for Spanish-English bilingual education. In 1980, there were a total of 575 projects serving, roughly, 315,000 children.

In 1974, a unanimous decision was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court. The case, Lau v Nichols, has changed the way in which bilingual education is viewed. It involved non-English-speaking Chinese students who, in 1970, accused the San Francisco Unified School District of discrimination because they were being taught only in English, a language they could not understand and were not being helped to learn. Their claim was that the lack of programs designed to meet their special education needs violated both Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which contains a provision forbidding discrimination on the basis of national origin, and the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The Lau decision was of enormous impact. Voluntary use of native languages in the classroom had already been given federal validation by the passage of the Bilingual Education Act. For the first time, language rights were recognized as a civil right. Schools receiving federal funds were legally obligated to provide limited-English-speaking students with special assistance. Schools were also told that children must not be denied full participation, while learning English, in the education process. The court left how it should be done to state and local education agencies.

While the Lau "remedies" did not mandate bilingual education, they did reject the sole use of ESL at the elementary level. This was equal to requiring that bilingual programs be established, with ESL, perhaps, as a component, unless an equally acceptable alternative could be produced by the schools. The reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act in 1974, influenced by Lau,

lessened the compensatory nature of the program and stated that the focus of the act was to "establish equal educational opportunity for all children."

5. Vocational education. Variations in the definition of vocational education cause confusion in trying to properly categorize a student who is taking both academic and vocational courses. When looking at ethnicity, one must keep in mind that vocational education programs serve students in the age groups where the attrition rate for minority students is quite high.

6. Special education. Under Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, it is mandated that schools must provide special education programs for children identified as "educable mentally retarded, trainable mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, speech impaired, orthopedically handicapped, visually handicapped, hard of hearing or other health impaired, and gifted and talented." Rates of participation for Hispanics in special classes for the handicapped appear to be inconsistent with their percentage of the student population, especially among migrants, where mobility mitigates against identification and placement. Hispanic children also seem to be underrepresented in special classes for the gifted and talented due, perhaps in part, to the fact that entrance tests are in English.

7. The need for teachers. The shortage of bilingual teachers has worsened in many areas, and many schools opening each year lack enough bilingual teachers to handle the recent influx of Cuban, Vietnamese and Russian refugees. Added to these shortages is the already existing shortage of Spanish-speaking bilingual teachers. Los Angeles could use 1500 more instructors; Dallas needs 200. In Florida, only 60 percent of the 29,831 non-English-speaking students were able to get special assistance last year, and 20,0000 more entered this year.

School districts struggle in various ways to compensate for the lack of bilingual teachers. Michigan employs 221 teachers who have not yet finished their bilingual training, and still lacks 860. Houston offers $500 in extra annual pay, but only a few pay more. A sufficient number of trained bilingual teachers does not exist now. When will they be available? Are there enough currently attending teacher preparation or inservice programs to fill the need? The answer, unfortunately, appears to be "no." Without adequate bilingual education, students may be confused and disoriented, and could well become juvenile delinquents.

8. Texts. With the establishment of bilingual materials and resource centers, the need for effective and appropriate textbooks for Mexican American students has been met quite effectively in the most needed areas of supplemental classroom textbooks as well as other instructional materials. Some work yet remains to be done, however, in encouraging major publishers to accurately reflect the culture and contributions of Mexican Americans in regular classroom texts.

Recommendations

The Mexican Americans in the United States want a good education for themselves and for their children, for they sincerely believe that our children will be the caretakers of tomorrow. All one needs to look at is the present median age to realize that today's youth will be the decision makers of the 1990s and 2000s. The following recommendations are made so that Mexican Americans will also have their day in the sun as contributing citizens of this great nation. To that end, it is recommended that:

- Legislators, educators, administrators and decision makers should become better acquainted with the historical background of Mexican American students so that the legacy of their four cultures is recognized and appreciated and so that they will, in turn, be accorded the first class citizenship they justly deserve.

- More concise, current data should be kept on the Hispanic groups identified by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in order to better address the specific education needs of each group.

- Mexican Americans, as a fast growing population of this nation, do not wish to overthrow existing systems -- social, economic or educational -- but do wish to be allowed to share in the decisions that affect all American citizens. Means should be found and implemented to assure that they do.

- Any remnants of discrimination against, or segregation of, Mexican Americans should be eliminated from wherever they may exist so that all can live in harmony with each other in this nation.

- Mexican American migrant students' mobility, along with that of non-Hispanic migrants, should be recognized as an obstacle to high school graduation and continuation to higher education. The academic credit accrual and exchange process should be facilitated and validated by school jurisdictions in which students do creditable classwork.

- Bilingual education is a viable, realistic and rational approach to establishing equal educational opportunity for all children. It should be supported by all educators.

In Closing...

In closing, we offer two education axioms of unknown authorship, but very very relevant to the topic dealt with in this paper:

> "Each of us inherits the work, art, philosophy, language, science and all the other facets of all previous mankind. Whether we take full advantage of that inheritance is a separate issue -- but it is one of the functions of education to help each of our citizens to be able to do so."

> "We cannot repay our ancestors, except by investing in our own children, in the next generation, in honor of the debt we owe the past. And we should be most willing to share knowledge. For knowledge is the one thing that one can give away without losing. Indeed, in the exchange of knowledge, we all gain."

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